

## Complaints Policy

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1.0	12/05/2007	D West	B McCormick	<b>18/01/2022</b>
1.1	12/05/2007	D West	B McCormick	<b>18/02/2022 - Reviewed</b>

### Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure we have an effective standard procedure to be followed when receiving a complaint. All complaints will be handled seriously and positively with a view to learning from them to improve services for others and ameliorate any problems for the person making the complaint.

### Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Veincentre.

Our policy is to:

- provide a fair complaint's procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- make sure everyone at Veincentre knows what to do if a complaint is received
- make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- gather information which helps us to improve what we do

This policy applies to all personnel who receive a complaint either via telephone, email, letter, in person or via any other means including social media sites. Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Veincentre.

This policy does not cover complaints from Veincentre staff, who should consult the Staff Concerns Policy.

### Procedure/ Process

Information regarding our Complaint's Policy can be found on our website at:

<https://www.veincentre.com/>. On booking a treatment appointment, all patients are also informed in writing of how to make a complaint within the useful information sheet (appendix A). We encourage all patient comments and feedback to be provided at the earliest opportunity as our aim is to try and sort out any issues as quickly and informally as possible.

We believe a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If you receive a complaint, we urge you to attempt to resolve the issue swiftly, if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information must be passed onto the our complaints manager within 24 hours.

### **Receiving A Complaint**

Verbal complaints can be made by phone or in person to any of Veincentre's staff or contracted clinicians.

All complaints received by telephone or in person will be recorded following consent from the complainant.

The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:

- Make a record of the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Veincentre (e.g. patient, external visitor, colleague)
- Inform the complainant of the complaints procedure (appendix B)
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take. Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

Written complaints should be sent to:

Veincentre Ltd, Unit 6, Lyme Vale Court, Parklands, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 6NW

or

by e-mail to:

[patientcare@veincentre.com](mailto:patientcare@veincentre.com)

Complainants are asked to include the following information in their complaint:

- name and contact details,
- a clear description of their complaint and any relevant times and dates
- details of any relevant healthcare providers or staff member
- any relevant correspondence, if applicable.

On receipt of a complaint, it will be entered into our complaints compliance tool. Complaints are raised and discussed at our weekly medical management meeting. Following review, the complainant will be informed of the next steps and timescale for closing the complaint. Any further action such as reporting to external bodies will be carried out at this stage.

If a patient wants a relative or friend to act as an advocate for them during the complaint's process they will need to put this in writing. We will need to see this written consent before we can respond to their complaint.

## **Resolving a Complaint**

Following receipt of a formal complaint, the complaints manager will contact the complainant to discuss their concerns, ideally face to face in private, if at all possible and acceptable to them.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Written acknowledgment will be sent to the complainant within two working days explaining the process for handling complaints and the steps we will take to investigate your complaint. Unless the issues need a longer investigation period due to their complexity, we will send a full written response within 20 working days. Where an investigation in progress exceeds this timeframe we will send a letter every 20 working days explaining the reason for the delay. A full response will be made within 5 working days of a conclusion being reached.

The Head Office Manager may invite the complainant to meet with us to ensure we fully understand the issues. Any complaint about clinical care will be referred to the appropriate clinical staff member, either consultant or nurse.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the response from the Head Office Manager or referred clinical staff member, they can ask for their complaint to be reviewed by the Medical Director.

If their complaint is about the Medical Director, they will be offered a discussion with an independent consultant.

Where requested, the patient and/or their advocate are given support in using the Complaints Procedure.

For patients attending clinics based in Scotland, they can bring their complaint to the attention of:

Programme Manager  
Independent Healthcare Services Team  
Healthcare Improvement Scotland  
Gyle Square  
1 South Gyle Crescent  
Edinburgh  
EH12 9EB

Tel: 0131 623 4342

Email: [hcis.ihcregulation@nhs.net](mailto:hcis.ihcregulation@nhs.net)

Further details can be found here:

[http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our\\_work/inspecting\\_and\\_regulating\\_care/independent\\_healthcare/ihc\\_complaints\\_procedure.aspx](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/inspecting_and_regulating_care/independent_healthcare/ihc_complaints_procedure.aspx)

For patients attending our Cardiff clinic they can contact

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales  
Welsh Govt  
Rhydycar Business park  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF48 1UZ

Complaints that have not been resolved locally may be referred to the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudications Service (ISCAS) complaints process.

The address is:  
ISCAS  
CEDR 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
100 St Paul's Churchyard  
London  
EC4M 8BU

Veincentre will co-operate fully with any external investigation.

### **Other Considerations**

**Confidentiality:** All complaint information is to be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

**Being customer focused:** We will support complainants through the complaints process.

**Acting fairly and proportionately:** We will treat all complainants impartially and without discrimination. We will ensure that decisions are proportionate, appropriate and fair.

**Putting things right:** We will apologise and acknowledge where mistakes have happened and will provide prompt, appropriate and proportionate remedies.

**Seeking continuous improvement:** We will learn lessons from complaints and we will use this learning to improve service design and delivery.

If requested, we must provide CQC/ HIS with information about a complaint within 28 days when requested to do so.

### **Records**

All Complaints will be recorded in the complaints compliance tool.

### **Forms/ Templates**

[Complaints Log & Investigation form](#)

### **Internal and External References**

Patient Document: [Complaint Procedure](#)

[Parliamentary Health Services Ombudsman](#)

[www.CQC/HIS.org.uk](http://www.CQC/HIS.org.uk)

[https://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our\\_work/inspecting\\_and\\_regulating\\_care/independent\\_healthcare/ihc\\_complaints\\_procedure.aspx](https://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/inspecting_and_regulating_care/independent_healthcare/ihc_complaints_procedure.aspx)

[ICO: Subject Access Checklist](#)

**Responsibility**

It is compulsory for all staff to follow this procedure.

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Medical Director.

**Audit**

Complaints are reviewed on a case by case basis to identify anything that Veincentre needs to improve upon swiftly.

The Complaints' Log is reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.